

**DAY CARE CENTRE OPERATIONS:**

**SOME BEST PRACTICES**

**FACILITATOR'S GUIDE TO THE VIDEO**

**University of Technology  
Entrepreneurial Extension Centre  
237 Old Hope Road  
Kingston 6, Jamaica**

**Financed by:  
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# **FACILITATOR'S GUIDE TO THE VIDEO**

## **DAY CARE CENTRE OPERATIONS: SOME BEST PRACTICES**

### **A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

#### **. PURPOSE**

This guide was prepared to provide information on how to use the video “Day Care Centre Operations: Some Best Practices” as a training tool in a group training session. This step-by-step guide is intended to help facilitators to structure discussion so that individuals viewing the video are able to remember key points and put them into practice in their own businesses.

The purpose of the video is to demonstrate to day care owners and operators key practices which lead to growth and success in a day care business. These practices are illustrated in the video through interviews with real day care operators filmed at their businesses. The video is based on research into the experiences of many day care operators throughout Jamaica.

The “Participant's Guide to the Video: Day Care Centre Operations” was prepared to accompany the facilitator's guide. The Participant's Guide is intended to help video viewers to remember the main points from the video and encourages viewers to take notes and to set their own goals for implementing best practices in their own businesses.

#### **. STRUCTURE**

This guide consists primarily of a series of questions to be asked of training participants. Facilitators are instructed to stop the video at specific points, giving them an opportunity to engage participants in discussion and analysis of what they have seen in order to help them to process and retain the information shared in the video. The questions are written in bold type to enable facilitators to easily locate and read them. Participant responses are noted on flip chart paper so that a visual record of the session is formed, and to permit additional information to be added on each topic as participants view subsequent portions of the video.

One of the tasks of the facilitator is to adopt this guide to the needs of the individual participants in a specific training session. The needs of particular groups will vary based on their characteristics, including business size, time in business, geographic location, and the participants’ ability to learn and grasp new ideas. The facilitator can choose to allow

more time for discussions which arise during the training, or to pursue topics which are not referred to in the video but are of particular interest to the participants. Questions can also be asked in a different order than that presented in the guide, or less emphasis may be placed on some topics.

. **MATERIALS**

To carry out the training session described in this guide, facilitators need:

VCR and television

A copy of the "Participant's Guide to the Video: Day Care Centre Operations" for each participant

Flip chart paper and markers

. **TIME**

The training session described in this guide requires approximately 3 hours. However, if the facilitator chooses to allow more time for certain discussions, or to pursue topics which are not referred to in the video, the session could also take longer.

. **PREPARATION**

Facilitators should view the video prior to teaching the training session to insure that they understand the points that are made and know where to stop the video and begin the discussion.

Before the session, write the following titles on pages of flip chart paper, one to a page:

ENVIRONMENT

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

TYPES OF CARE

LOCATION

RELATIONSHIP WITH PARENTS

RELATIONSHIP WITH STAFF

PRICING

RECORD KEEPING

PROBLEMS WITH COLLECTING FEES

CHILD/STAFF RATIO

STAFF TRAINING

OWNER TRAINING

Each page should be posted somewhere in the training room where it can be written on during the session and is visible to all participants. Facilitators should also prepare copies of the participant's guide for each participant.

## B. SESSION DETAIL

### STEP 1: INTRODUCTION

Before beginning to view the video, the facilitator should make sure that all participants are comfortable participating in the session and are motivated to learn. If appropriate, participants should introduce themselves to each other and to the facilitator. Tell participants that the video is based on the experiences of many day care operators, and that by learning from them they may be able to avoid making mistakes and to find new ways to succeed.

Distribute the participant's guide and briefly review its contents with the group. Explain that they will be looking for and discussing best practices in the categories listed on the flip charts posted around the walls; show them where the same categories are listed in their participant's guides. Encourage participants to make notes in their guides in the space provided on pages 4-7, and to add ideas generated during the session to the checklist on pages 1-3.

*Time for this step: 15 minutes*

### STEP 2: VIEWING THE VIDEO

Turn on the video and have participants watch the introduction and then Mrs. Seaton's presentation. Turn off the video at the end of her interview, when the screen fades to black after she says "it's good to know that at least somebody believes in you and knows that the child is taken care of and well protected."

*Time for this step: 15 minutes*

### STEP 3: DISCUSSION

- a. Remind participants that Mrs. Seaton discussed many important areas, and explain that the group will be discussing some of them now and some later. These areas include: staff and owner training, environment, additional services she provides, types of care children need, location, relationships with parents and staff, appropriate staff/child ratios, record keeping, and collecting fees.
- b. Say that first they will be discussing the topic of "environment". Ask **"What did Mrs. Seaton describe as the most important characteristics of the day care environment?"** Note their answers on the flip chart titled "Environment". Answer should include cleanliness and safety.
- c. Ask **"What additional services does Mrs. Seaton provide to her customers for a fee?"** and note their answers on the flip chart titled "Additional Services". Answers

should include dropping off and picking up older children from school and providing after school care. Ask **“What other special services can be provided at day care centres?”** and note answers on the flip chart. Discuss the pros and cons of offering additional services, and note the main points from the discussion on the flip chart.

- d. Say that Mrs. Seaton discussed problems she had encountered with locating her day care in her home, including problems from the landlord and the neighbors. Ask **“What did she do to overcome problems with her landlord and neighbors?”** Answer should include Mrs. Seaton's emphasis on developing a positive relationships and communicating honestly with her landlord and neighbors. Ask **“What problems have you encountered due to your location, and how did you overcome them?”** Note key points from the discussion on the flip chart titled “Location”.
- e. Ask **“What key points did Mrs. Seaton make about building relationships with parents?”** and list answers on the flip chart. The list should include: getting to know each other in order to establish trust, communicating so that parents and caregivers agree on how to raise the child, and keeping up a two-way flow of information on illnesses and accidents. Ask **“Do you remember how parents contributed to fundraising for the centre?”** Answer should be that they organized a bingo party to raise money for new building construction. Ask **“Do you have other ideas about building relationships with parents and involving them in the centre?”** and note their answers on the flip chart.
- f. Ask **“What advice did Mrs. Seaton give on how to treat employees?”** Make sure participants mention working on keeping staff happy and motivated and solving problems as they arise; on screen she demonstrated how she is available to her staff. Ask participants **“What other suggestions do you have for establishing good relationships with your employees?”** Note all responses on the appropriate flip chart.
- g. Finally, ask participants **“What problems did Mrs. Seaton experience with collecting fees and how did she overcome them?”** and note their answers on the flip chart titled “Problems with Collecting Fees”. Answer should include parents who pay late and others who don't pay at all; Mrs. Seaton deals with these problems by speaking honestly with parents about the consequences of payment problems. She also mentioned an important practice: parents who pick their children up late must pay overtime to the staff.

Say that they will return to some of these topics and others after watching another portion of the video.

*Time for this step: 45 minutes*

#### **STEP 4: VIEWING THE VIDEO**

Turn on the video and have participants watch the presentation by Mrs. Barnett and Mrs. Pounall. Turn off the video at the end of the program, after the final comments and

credits.

*Time for this step: 15 minutes*

## STEP 5: DISCUSSING THE VIDEO

Say that now they will return to some of the same topics discussed previously, as well as review a few new areas brought up by Mrs. Barnett and Mrs. Pounall.

- a. Say that now they will discuss appropriate training for owners and operators. Ask participants **“Do you remember what training Mrs. Seaton, Mrs. Barnett and Mrs. Pounall received?”** Note their answers on the flip chart titled “Owner Training”. Ask participants **“What training did you complete to prepare yourself to run a day care centre?”** and note their answers on the flip chart. Discuss why training is important, and what other training they think it might be important to receive. Note that on page 8 of their Participant's Guide there is a list of training resources as well as other sources of assistance.
- b. Tell participants that now you are returning to the topic of environment. Ask **“What did Mrs. Barnett add about the important characteristics of a day care environment?”**. Note their answers on the flip chart which was established in the previous step. Answer should include providing adequate space, practicing good hygiene, and providing a stimulating environment with age appropriate activities and materials. Then, going back to each point on the flip chart, ask participants to define and describe what each item means, to be sure that they understand each point and why it is important. For example, ask them what a “safe” day care environment would look like.
- c. Say that both presentations referred to the two types of care children require. Ask **“What are the two types of care?”** Answers should be “stimulation” and “custodial”. Ask participants **“Can you define each type of care and give examples of each?”** Ask **“Why is each type of care important?”** Ask participants **“Do you practice both types of care in your centre? Why or why not?”** Note responses on the flip chart titled “Types of Care”.
- d. Ask **“Do you remember what Mrs. Barnett said about requirements for staff education and experience?”** Answer should be that she suggested hiring individuals who have no training but may have some experience (such as with babysitting at home); they can be trained on the job. Ask **“What type of training does Mrs. Barnett offer to her staff?”**; answer should include disciplining children, talking to children, and meeting other standards of the centre. Note answers on the flip chart titled “Staff Training”. Ask **“Do you remember what Mrs. Seaton suggested about who to hire?”** She mentioned hiring staff who are intelligent (rather than necessarily “educated”) and have the “right” personality for working with children. Ask participants **“What experiences have you had in the area of staff training? What education and experience do you look for, and**



**why? What training do you provide on the job? Do you require staff to attend training offered by other institutions?"** Note key points from the discussion on the flip chart titled "Staff Training".

- e. Ask **"Do you remember what records Mrs. Seaton and Mrs. Barnett suggested should be kept?"** These should include attendance records, financial records, and accident records. Ask **"Are there any other important records which should be kept? Why is it important to keep records?"** Note all responses on the flip chart.
- f. Mrs. Barnett talked about appropriate staff/child ratios. Ask **"What is meant by appropriate ratios? Do you remember what Mrs. Barnett said about her ratios?"** Answer should be up to 12 months, 1 caregiver for every four children; 1-2 years, 1 caregiver for every 6 children; and over 2 years, 1 caregiver for every 10 children. Ask **"What is the benefit of appropriate staff/child ratios?"** Note answers on the flip chart titled Staff/Child Ratios".
- g. Ask **"What important thing did Mrs. Barnett say about how she sets her prices?"** and note answers on the flip chart entitled "Pricing". Answer should be that she tries to make accurate financial projections which include all costs: rent, salaries, equipment, supplies, etc. Write these items on the flip chart, and then ask participants **"What other costs must be included in financial projections?"** These might include utilities, training fees, interest on loans, bank charges, insurance, taxes, and depreciation. Mrs. Barnett also said she determines prices based on what similar businesses are charging. Ask **"How do you determine your prices?"** and note their ideas and comments on the flip chart.
- h. Ask **"How did Mrs. Barnett collect fees from parents who have not paid? How does this compare with Mrs. Seaton's approach?"** Mrs. Barnett sends written notices which are more strongly worded each time, and ultimately threatens to take action. Ask **"How have you solved the problem of collecting fees?"** Note Mrs. Barnett's approach, as well as other participant comments, on the flip chart titled "Problems with Collecting Fees".
- i. Both Mrs. Seaton and Mrs. Barnett said they are always available, always present at their businesses. Ask participants **"Do you think this is important, and why?"** They also emphasized the importance of treating the day care as a business and of acting in a professional way. Ask **"What is meant by this, and why are such attitudes important?"**
- j. Ask participants **"Do you have other experiences or ideas you would like to add to the discussion on any of the topics, or any other topics you would like to discuss?"** Note their responses on the appropriate flip chart, or create new flip charts if needed.

*Time for this step: 50 minutes*

## **STEP 6: SETTING GOALS**

Emphasize that an important part of any training is practicing what has been learned, and explain that they should practice these ideas in their own businesses. In order to help participants focus on what to practice, ask them to spend 10 minutes noting down their own goals with respect to each of the categories discussed. **“What do you want to accomplish or implement in your own business, based on what you have learned today? When do you plan to accomplish each goal?”** Ask them to note their own goals and timeline for achieving them in the space provided in the participant's guide pages 4-7.

Tell participants that they probably will not have time during the session to make final decisions about goals in each area, and that they should complete the work at home. Suggest that they keep the Participant's Guide at hand so they can consult it frequently; perhaps they can post the checklist (pages 1-3 of the guide) where they will see it every day as a reminder.

Ask if 2 or 3 participants are willing to share some of their goals with the rest of the group.

*Time for this step: 20 minutes*

## **STEP 7: CLOSING**

Ask if participants recall what Mrs. Seaton, Mrs. Barnett and Mrs. Pounall said about why they choose to be self employed and if they remember that all three talked about choosing day care because they love children. Ask participants to talk about why they are self-employed and why they chose day care as a business.

*Time for this step: 15 minutes*

# PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE TO THE VIDEO

## DAY CARE CENTRE OPERATIONS: SOME BEST PRACTICES

*“At all times the operator has to be motivated...be enthusiastic to face the day. There are going to be good days and there are going to be bad days; there are going to be days when you want to hide under the bed.” (Mrs. Barnett)*

### . KEY BEST PRACTICES

Ask yourself whether you are implementing the best practices suggested in the video in the following key areas:



#### ENVIRONMENT

- ✓ Clean
- ✓ Safe
- ✓ Adequate space and equipment
- ✓ Good personal hygiene for staff and children
- ✓ Stimulating and age appropriate materials and activities
- ✓ Other:



#### PROVIDING ADDITIONAL SERVICES

- ✓ Dropping off and picking up older kids at school
- ✓ Providing meals and snacks
- ✓ After school care
- ✓ Charge a fee for these services
- ✓ Other:



#### TYPES OF CARE

- ✓ Custodial
- ✓ Stimulation



#### LOCATION

- ✓ Positive relationship with landlord
- ✓ Positive relationship with neighbors

✓ Other:



#### RELATIONSHIP WITH PARENTS

- ✓ Getting to know each other in order to establish trust
- ✓ Establish systems for regular and open communication
- ✓ Agree on approach to raising child
- ✓ Be available at all times
- ✓ Involve parents in day care activities such as fundraising
- ✓ Other:



#### RELATIONSHIP WITH STAFF

- ✓ Find ways to keep employees happy and motivated
- ✓ Solve problems as they arise
- ✓ Be available to staff
- ✓ Agree on approach to raising child
- ✓ Other:



#### RECORD KEEPING

- ✓ Financial records: accounts receivable and payable
- ✓ Attendance records for staff and children
- ✓ Medical records
- ✓ Admission records: essential information on each child
- ✓ Daily activity record
- ✓ Other:



#### PROBLEMS WITH COLLECTING FEES

- ✓ Speak honestly with parents about consequences of payment problems to you and them
- ✓ Establish system of written notification of late payment
- ✓ Prosecute if necessary
- ✓ Other:



#### CHILD/STAFF RATIO

- ✓ Government regulations are ten children to one caregiver
- ✓ Appropriate ratios insure well-being of each child
- ✓ Other:



#### PRICING

- ✓ Make financial projections which include all costs
- ✓ Set prices in collaboration with other day care centres
- ✓ Other:



#### STAFF TRAINING

- ✓ On-the-job training is effective for staff
- ✓ Train staff in appropriate discipline for children, effective ways to communicate with children, and centre standards
- ✓ Hire staff with intelligence and the right personality for working with children
- ✓ Other:



#### OWNER TRAINING

- ✓ Administrative/business management training
- ✓ Child care education
- ✓ Other:

*“They are constantly there, saying things to make you laugh, that you can't help but be happy around them. And I love this type of job, I love it. I love being in it, and I choose it.” (Mrs. Pounall)*

## **B. NOTE TAKING AND GOAL SETTING**

The following space is provided for you to take notes and to develop personal goals in each area.

### **. ENVIRONMENT**

*My Goal and When I Will Accomplish It:*

### **2. PROVIDING ADDITIONAL SERVICES**

*My Goal and When I Will Accomplish It:*

### **. TYPES OF CARE**

*My Goal and When I Will Accomplish It:*

. LOCATION

*My Goal and When I Will Accomplish It:*

. RELATIONSHIP WITH PARENTS

*My Goal and When I Will Accomplish It:*

. RELATIONSHIP WITH STAFF

*My Goal and When I Will Accomplish It:*

. PRICING

*My Goal and When I Will Accomplish It:*

. RECORD KEEPING

*My Goal and When I Will Accomplish It:*

. PROBLEMS WITH COLLECTING FEES

*My Goal and When I Will Accomplish It:*



. CHILD/STAFF RATIO

*My Goal and When I Will Accomplish It:*

. STAFF TRAINING

*My Goal and When I Will Accomplish It:*

. OWNER TRAINING

*My Goal and When I Will Accomplish It:*

*“...You have to love children. Maintain a professional attitude with staff and parents and guardians. Because if your approach is not professional you are going to have a break down. (Mrs. Seaton)*

## **C. RESOURCES**

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

Ministry of Health  
Children's Services Division Day Care Unit  
10A Chelsea Avenue  
Kingston 10  
Tel: 926-2002/926-2007

Voluntary Organization for the Upliftment of  
Children (VOUCH)  
1 National Heroes Circle  
Kingston 6

St. Margaret's Church  
167 Old Hope Road  
Kingston 6

### **BUSINESS MANAGEMENT TRAINING**

JAMPRO Entrepreneurial Centre  
8 Waterloo Road  
Kingston 10

University of Technology  
Entrepreneurial Extension Centre  
237 Old Hope Road  
Kingston 6

Jamaican Institute of Management  
47 Hope Road  
Kingston 10

### **LITERATURE**

Caribbean Child Development Centre (CCDC)  
University of the West Indies  
Department of Extra Mural Studies  
Mona  
Kingston 7  
Tel: 927-1661/1661-9

“Business Opportunity and Best Practices Profile

for Day Care Centres”  
Available from the Entrepreneurial Extension  
Centre at the University of Technology

### **GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS**

Ministry of Health  
Children's Services Division Day Care Unit  
10A Chelsea Avenue  
Kingston 10  
Tel: 92602002/926-2007

### **ASSOCIATIONS (ADVICE AND INFORMATION)**

Jamaica Day Care Association  
P.O. Box 200  
Kingston 5

### **SOURCE OF LOANS**

The National Development Foundation of Jamaica  
(NDFJ)  
22B Old Hope Road  
Kingston 5

Self Start Fund  
4 South Odeon Avenue  
Kingston 10

Enterprise Development Trust (EDT)  
10 East Avenue  
Kingston 4

Credit Unions